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death by the comrades who survive and by those who come after them—a thing that the Teuton most eagerly desired.

There is scarcely an allusion to war-life in the 'Seafarer.' *duġuð* occurs twice (S. 80, 86), and *ecġhete* (S. 70) sword-hate is a word used to mean war—one of the three ways in which death comes to man. Such expressions as *wiġ* (W. 80), *wiġa* (W. 67), *byrnmwiġa* (W. 94), *modġe maġuþeġnas* (W. 62), *duġuð* (W. 79, 97), *collenferð* (W. 71), *ġielf* (W. 69), tend to give the 'Wanderer' a more warlike coloring. The exile is mindful of cruel slaughters, of the downfall of dear kinsmen *wraþra wælslehta*, *winemæġa hryre* (W. 7). All of the brave troop fell heroically before the rampart *duġuð eal ġecronġ wolnc bi wealle* (W. 79-80). The strength of ashen spears snatched away the earls, weapons greedy of slaughter, the far-armed Wyrd

W. 99 f.

*eorlas fornoman asca þrype,
wæpen wælġifru, wyrd seo mære.*

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THE VIVACITIES OF MR. GOSSE.

THERE is a certain emancipated school of artists who, casting off the yoke of ancient tradition, have risen to a higher conception of the object and aims of art. The supreme duty of the artist is not, we are told, to represent things as they are or as they would be, but to convey to the spectator the impression they produce on him who beheld or conceived them. Object that the lady's hair cannot be that impossible purple, or that this outline or attitude is not reconcilable with human anatomy, and the answer is that the artist is not a photographer, and his business is not to record facts, but his own impressions. A view which lifts plastic art to that transcendent sphere where music has hitherto dwelt alone.

While some of our literary critics of late years have carried into their art the methods of the exacter sciences, and by their formulæ can precipitate Dekker or Rowley from the most complex solution, or trace the curve of Massinger through five intricate acts,

others, impatient of statistical criticism, have sought refuge in the enchanted castle of the impressionists. Among these Mr. Gosse, who is nothing if not entertaining, has given the world at various times his impressions of a considerable number of writers, especially of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in a tone of airy lightness and joyous irresponsibility that reminds one of an emancipated Ariel sipping the blossoms that hang on the bough.

Mr. Gosse's last work is devoted to his impressions of the Jacobean poets. But at the very outset, perhaps as a concession to our Philistinism, he makes what we venture to think an unfortunate mistake—he attempts to define. Had he been content with telling us whom he classed as Jacobean poets and whom as Elizabethan, he would have kept on safe ground; but he somewhat rashly proceeds to lay down criteria by which we may draw the distinction ourselves. Of course the ordinary reader is likely to share the ordinary view, that the Jacobean poet is one who flourished, or tried to flourish, in the reign of King James; but Mr. Gosse hastens to guard us against this error. He does not deny that there were Jacobeans in James's time; but that is not the point at all. It is not a question of date but characteristics. There are certain qualities of the writing that make a writer an Elizabethan or Jacobean, whatever year he wrote in; and these qualities he proceeds to formulate. In the first place the Jacobeans had lost "the clear morning note, the sincerity, the coolness and sober sweetness" of their predecessors. We could use this test more satisfactorily if we were but sure what these are; and our perplexity is increased when the critic comes to apply his own criteria. For example, in Fletcher's 'Faithful Shepherdess,' beginning—

"See the day begins to break,
And the light shoots like a streak
Of subtle fire; the wind blows cold,
And the morning doth unfold"—

one would think if anywhere, "the clear morning note" was heard; but it appears we are wrong, for Fletcher is cited as "characteristically" Jacobean. The "decline of lyrical gift" is another criterion, and he hastens to

anticipate obvious objections by assuring us that the writers whose names are on our lips are really "belated Elizabethans."

Again we are told that the Jacobean is conscious and artificial, the Elizabethan natural and unaffected; but should anyone mention Lyly and Buckhurst, he is answered that these were Jacobean by anticipation, and so was Davies, who, though all his poetry was written under Elizabeth, has "hardly a trace of Elizabethan qualities." Furthermore "no true Jacobean was a great translator;" and anticipating the caviller who will point to Gorges' 'Lucan,' published in 1614, he replies—not as we should have expected, that it is not a great translation, or that this is another belated Elizabethan, but—that it "was, in all probability, written twenty years earlier." If we ask for proof, the answer is obvious: because no Jacobean was a great translator. By a similar syllogism we can prove Mr. Gosse a German, if he will concede the major premiss: none but Germans are profound and accurate critics.

But when, forgetting his principle, Mr. Gosse ventures on a date, the consequences are sometimes disastrous. "Bohemia lost its sea-ports, the realms of the Fairy Queen disappeared when James came to the throne." Now Bohemia acquired a sea-port for the first and only time in history, in 1611. And as for the fairy element in poetry (for Spenser's allegoric romance is out of the question) has he forgotten Jonson, Drayton, Browne and Herrick? But for the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' we might almost say that the fairies did not come into English poetry until James came to the throne. Once more he helps us in our perplexity: the test whereby we shall know a Jacobean is "passion, depth of thought, literary cleverness, and a closer pertinence to passing events." In brief Jacobeanism is when a man is being whereby 'a may be thought to be a Jacobean; which is an excellent thing.

But our present object is not to review Mr. Gosse's very readable 'Jacobean Poets,' but to call attention to his vivacious way of treating the reader to little agreeable surprises, presenting things in a new light, or with some fresh and unexpected turn. When he cites a

familiar phrase of Keats in the new guise of "perilous seas forlorn;" or refers to the prosaic, but eminently respectable Stapylton as "an apparently lunatic person;" or enriches the language with a new verb—"the bold Icelanders who went *a-viking*"—we are kept in a state of agreeable wonder as to what is to come next. When he informs us that in a certain scene "Etheredge introduces a velvet coat, a flageolet, a pair of bands, with touches that reminds one of Metz," whereas no one of these articles is "introduced" at all, but merely mentioned without "touches" of any sort; or when he tells us that "Sir Nicholas Cully rides to visit the widow on a tavern-boy's back," while in the text he only "enters, kicking a tavern-boy before him," we enjoy the picturesque vivacity that can add a sparkle even to Etheredge. That lively comedy 'She Would if She Could' undoubtedly deserved to succeed on its first presentation, and so Mr. Gosse evidently thinks, for he tells us "the grateful town accepted it with enthusiasm;" but as matter of fact it failed on its first performance, as we know from Pepys and Shadwell, and Etheredge, in high dudgeon, stopped writing for seven or eight years.

But it is perhaps in his study of Herrick that we meet with the most piquant of these little surprises. We are told that Jonson's 'Oberon,' "contains the germs of many of Herrick's most fantastic fairy-fancies," and set the latter poet "dreaming about the misty land where elves sit eating butterflies' legs around little mushroom tables." There is nothing the least like this in 'Oberon,' nor is any kind of fairy diet mentioned. In fact, 'Oberon' is hardly a fairy masque at all, in the sense here implied, nor can we discover a single germ in it; and if Herrick was indebted to anyone, it was most likely to Drayton, or to Browne, who has a fairy feast of most ingenious fancy. Again "Herrick writes of Fletcher thirty years later as though he had known him slightly, and speaks of the power of the 'Maid's Tragedy' to make 'young men swoon,' as though he had seen it at the first performance." It is quite likely that Herrick may have known Fletcher, but there is no intimation of the sort in the lines in question. He is

hailing the appearance of the collected edition of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher (1647), and his words are,—

"Here [are] melting numbers, words of power to move
Young men to swoone, and maids to dye for love"—

—evidently not referring to an incident connected with any particular representation, but to the pathos and tenderness throughout the volume. Of course the concrete way of putting it is much more sprightly.

It is, from one point of view, a disadvantage of impressionist criticism that it is apt to give undue weight to whatever corroborates the critic's impression, and to draw conclusions less from carefully weighed evidence than from a conviction of the general fitness of things. What Bacon calls the Idols of the Cave are the impressionist critic's Lares and Penates. Mr. Gosse, whose impression of Herrick is that he is "a callous-souled old pagan," is perhaps too ready to judge him by his coarser and looser pieces, "writ in his wild unhallowed times." It is fair to hold the poet responsible for these, for if he wrote them as a layman, he was in holy orders when he published them; but not fair to judge his whole life by them. As for *Anthea*, *Perilla*, and other *amourettes*, they are evidently imaginary mistresses, after the fashion of the time, like the twenty, from *Margarita* to *Heleonora*, chronicled by Cowley, who never made love to a woman in his life. While Mr. Gosse dismisses these to the asphodel meadows wherem wander the phantoms of the *Florimels* and *Amorets* and other dream-ladies of poets' brains, he insists on the substantiality of *Julia*, who it seems was not only a very real but a very naughty young woman. She "ruled the poet's youth," she "bore him a daughter," and probably "died or passed away before Herrick left Cambridge." Now *Julia's* moral character does not concern us, but Herrick's does; and we cannot dismiss the matter in this easy way. If *Julia* was a real person and the poet's mistress, these illicit relations must have continued after he was in holy orders, and indeed till near the close of his life, for in several of the pieces addressed to her Herrick speaks of himself as an old man nearing the tomb, and asks *Julia* to go with him to choose his burial-place. But

he left Cambridge when he was only nineteen years old, and consequently was still a youth when, according to Mr. Gosse, the connection with *Julia* came to an end. We must not take only the facts that suit our theory and ignore the others. If, as Mr. Gosse insists, the personal note of these poems proves the reality of *Julia*, we must give equal weight to it wherever it occurs. We must not ignore the poem in which he tells her that he must go to celebrate divine service, nor that written in honor of her "churching," (a service of thanksgiving after recovery from childbirth) in which she is spoken of as a chaste and beloved wife. But "she bore him a daughter," says Mr. Gosse. Did she? The sole ground for this assertion consists in the fact that in the Ashmole MSS. there is a poem of no great merit entitled "Mr. Hericke his daughter's dowry," the dowry being virtue, modesty, neatness, good temper, and so forth. If we admit this evidence of a daughter, we have still stronger proof of a wife, for in *Hesperides* there is "Mr. Herrick's charge to his wife," not to mention a reference in another place to his "old wife" and his "young *Iulus*," an obvious allusion, emphasized by italics, but ignored by Mr. Gosse, who is quite sure that Herrick never married. There seems no reason why these poems should not stand or fall together; and it strikes us that the critic deals rather hard measure to the poet when in his zeal to prove him a sensual pagan, he accepts only what suits that uncharitable purpose—accepts the daughter but denies the wife.

That Herrick was susceptible to female beauty, no one disputes; and that he may have had special ladies in his mind when he sang *Anthea*, *Perenna*, and the rest, is not unlikely; but that there was any one woman to whom he was bound by close and tender ties, I see no ground for asserting; far less, if less be possible, that his relations with her were illicit and degrading. Herrick himself more than once assures us that though his verses were sometimes free, his life was chaste; that he lived in the fear of God and hope of heaven; and I for one, see no reason, in the lack of positive evidence, to disbelieve him.

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